



How Much Time Has Passed Since Dinosaurs Were Around?

Adapted from *How Much Time Has Passed Since Dinosaurs Were Around?* Activity
from Bill Nye the Science Guy's Great Big Dinosaur Dig Book, p. 31

Grade Level: K-8

Preparation Time: 5-10 minutes

Activity Duration: 5-30 minutes

Concepts Addressed

- The Earth's history has spanned a *very* long time.
- The Mesozoic Era began around 240 million years ago and ended around 65 million years ago.

Objectives

The student will:

- Create and/or observe a model of earth history from the first dinosaurs to present.

Materials Not Included

- 500 sheet package of paper
- Pencils, markers or crayons

Background

This activity is probably best done as a demo, but could be done together as a class or in groups. The purpose of this activity is to show that earth history is very long (and this activity only goes back to the time of the non-avian dinosaurs (terminology explained in *Dinosaur* section)), non-avian dinosaurs persisted for a relatively long period of time relative to human history, and that a lot of time has gone on between the extinction of the non-avian dinosaurs and the existence of human life.

Procedure

1. Write **FIRST DINOSAURS** at the very top of the first page of the stack of paper. That's the start of your Pages of Time. The stack of paper represents 100 million years. Each side of each page represents 100,000 years.
2. The non-avian dinosaurs became extinct 65 million years ago. You can mark **NON-AVIAN DINOSAURS EXTINCT** 175 pages after **FIRST DINOSAURS**.
3. Now, go to the bottom of the back of the very last sheet of paper. That's where we come in. The last Ice Age ended about 25,000 years ago. That would be a fourth of the way down the back of the last page. Fold the paper and mark **ICE AGE OVER**. The pyramids in Egypt were built around 5,000 years ago. Mark **PYRAMIDS** on the same page

just 14 millimeters ($9/16$ of an inch) up from the bottom. Almost all of human recorded history—every newspaper, movie, photograph, king, queen, president and actor lived below this line. So do you and I.

4. If you live to be 90 years old, your whole life will fit in a pencil line just 0.25 millimeter ($1/100$ inch) wide right on the bottom edge of the back of the last page.